

ABSTRACT

This disclosure provides an improved system for culturing human pluripotent stem (pPS) cells in the absence of feeder cells. The role of the feeder cells can be replaced by supporting the culture on an extracellular matrix, and culturing the cells in a conditioned medium. Permanent cell lines are provided that can produce conditioned medium on a commercial scale. Methods have also been discovered to genetically alter pPS cells by introducing the cells with a viral vector or DNA/lipid complex. The system described in this disclosure allows for bulk proliferation of pPS cells for use in studying the biology of pPS cell differentiation, and the production of important products for use in human therapy.